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FROM : AmEmbassy KABUL

DATE: March 29, 1976

SUBJECT: Annual Policy Assessment

REF : A. 11 FAM 212.4; B. Kabul 1765; C. Kabul 1837 (1975)

At the direction of the Ambassador, the U.S. Mission Kabul has completed its annual policy assessment. As in previous years, the assessment exercise was carried out in several stages. First a Mission-wide policy review was undertaken by a Review Committee appointed by the Ambassador with members drawn from, but not "representing," various elements of the Mission. The Review Group then presented the results of its deliberations to the Country Team in a series of open and wide-ranging meetings. From these joint meetings and subsequent Country Team meetings emerged the final Annual Policy Assessment, transmitted to the Department as Reference B.

This airgram transmits the Policy Review Committee's paper presented to the Country Team (Enclosure #1), and a dissent/supplement prepared by a Review Group member which, in the interest of openness, was also presented to the Country Team and is enclosed with this airgram (Enclosure #2).

There was substantial agreement between the Country Team and the Review Group in most major issues and points of disagreement were discussed candidly and frankly. Both the Country Team and Review Group agreed that U.S. objectives in Afghanistan as defined in 1969 need be expanded and refined. There was also agreement concerning most of the specific recommendations made by the Review Group.

Enclosures:

As Above

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FORM 4-62 DS-323

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The enclosures to this airgram are, however, preliminary documents written for one stage of the assessment process and do not represent the Country Team assessment which is to be found in Reference B. They are submitted primarily to complement the final assessment.

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1976 POLICY REVIEW

U. S. MISSION KABUL

Foreword

Within the guidelines for the annual U.S. Policy Assessment (11 FAM 212.4) there are a number of aspects of U.S. policy toward Afghanistan that might usefully engage the attention of a preliminary Review Group. Previous reviews have variously focused on attempted redefinition of U.S. interests in Afghanistan, steps to increase effectiveness of existing programs, and the impact that the style of the American community may have on our individual and organizational effectiveness. Most of the preliminary Review Groups' and all of the Ambassadors' Annual U.S. Policy Assessments undertaken since 1970 have harkened back to the 1969 "Country Policy Statement: Afghanistan" (NSCIG/NEA 69-23, August 6 1969) - the last NSC approved statement of U.S. objectives, policy, and strategy in Afghanistan. The strategy of the 1976 Review is somewhat different. The major focus is on political, economic and international events since 1969 - and especially since the July 1973 coup - as they relate to Afghanistan and bear on the realization of U.S. objectives as defined in 1969. These developments have specific relevance for the linkage between our objectives and the resources the U.S. expends in the Mission's programs, activities, and development assistance to Afghanistan. This in turn involves an assessment of the extent our presence has afforded and currently affords us leverage to realize our objectives.

The Review Group's analysis admits two alternative conclusions. One bears on the level of our programs, activities, and presence - accepting as given the 1969 NSC definition of objectives and justifications for our activities. The alternative conclusion bears on the adequacy of those objectives to define exhaustively U.S. interests - as seen in the light of our activities here and of post-1969 shifts in the direction, emphasis, and priorities of U.S. foreign policy. Following these alternative conclusions the Review turns to recommendations on the conduct of our working relations with the Government of Afghanistan.

There are three Annexes and a Comment to this review. U.S. multilateral vs. bilateral interests, narcotics control, and U.S. private investment/contractor services are considered separately in the Annexes with statements of objectives and recommendations where appropriate. The Comment concerns the failure of the Mission to carry out a commitment undertaken in the Ambassador's 1975 Policy Assessment.

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Why We Are Here.

According to our traditional justifications we are not here because Afghanistan per se is important to the United States. To quote from the Mission's 1971 Policy Assessment:

"For the United States, Afghanistan has at present limited direct interest: it is not an important trading partner; ... it is not an access route for U.S. trade with others; there are no treaty ties or defense commitments; and Afghanistan does not provide us with significant defense, intelligence, or scientific facilities. ("Policy Review: A U.S. Strategy for the '70's," Kabul A-71, 26 June 1971.)

These assertions continue to be true in 1976. We are here because of the effect events in Afghanistan can, and have had, on regional stability. The 1969 NSC paper (p.9) asserts two (and only two) U.S. objectives in Afghanistan from which derive the justification of the type and level of our activities and programs here:

- "1. An independent and non-aligned Afghanistan, willing and able to impose limitations on Soviet influence in its affairs.
2. The development of closer Afghan regional ties through the improvement of relations with Pakistan and Iran."

Counterbalancing the Soviets.

We have over the years become accustomed to the Afghan invocation of a "large and visible U.S. presence" to balance or offset Soviet influence, and used to justifying our programs and activities in those terms. There is a danger these expressions have become cant. It is important to be clear in what ways our presence and activities have (and do) counterbalance Soviet influence in Afghanistan.

There can be no question of taking "counterbalance" literally. In terms of proximity, historical importance, trade relations, military supply and training, or economic assistance the balance would overwhelmingly weigh on the Soviet side. To quote from USAID Kabul's "FY 1977 Congressional Presentation: Country Narrative" (p. 2):

"It (the USSR) holds 3/4 of the country's external public debt; performs the dominant role in the

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exploration and exploitation of Afghanistan's natural gas and oil resources; is a major trading partner, and maintains 3,000-5,000 technical and military advisors who work in Kabul or in the Northern Provinces."

Our ability to counterbalance the Soviet Union is primarily political and has both internal and external aspects. Fundamental in both regards is the perception since WWII, that the United States and the USSR are the two major world powers and that they are in opposition.

External

U.S. support for Afghan independence and non-alignment as evidenced by our presence and activities here has acted as a check on possible Soviet ambitions in Afghanistan:

- 1) by making apparent to the USSR our commitment to continued Afghan independence and non-alignment;
- 2) by so doing, strengthening both Afghan resolve for, and the feasibility of, imposing limits on Soviet influence on its external and domestic policies; and
- 3) by giving content to the Afghan claim of non-alignment. The belief by other states in the region that Afghanistan is controlled by the USSR would itself be a threat to regional stability.

Internal

Our development assistance programs have aimed at creating conditions of economic development, and governmental and institutional stability. Underlying such aims is the premise that economic stagnation and political instability are conditions fertile for the growth of Soviet influence.

Most of the activities and programs of the Mission include, primarily or secondarily, the exposure of influential or potentially influential Afghans, and the Afghan public at large to U.S. society, culture, institutions and American ways of organizing men and resources. AID participant training; USIS cultural and informal activities, IVP, and scholarship programs; DAO's military training program; and the Peace

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Corps Volunteers' interaction with those with whom they work and teach - all are based to an extent on the premise that sympathetic exposure to the United States of Afghan leaders and members of the body politic serves to counter-balance the influence of those exposed to Soviet society, culture, and institutions.

In the 1969 NSC paper these strategies are explicit and derived directly from the objective of limiting Soviet influence in Afghan affairs.

Linkage of Our Two Objectives.

The second objective identified by the 1969 NSC paper - the promotion of improved relations between Afghanistan and its neighbors - is primarily aimed at moderating the long standing Pak/Afghan dispute over "Pushtunistan". Severe deterioration of relations between the two countries might lead to regional conflict and instability, thereby increasing the possibility of major power confrontation in the region. The Pushtunistan issue, however, is also directly related to increased Soviet influence in Afghan affairs short of confrontation.

Afghanistan is and was accustomed to a bi-polar view of the world, its independence and separate existence depended for over one hundred years on the stalemate in British and Tsarist/Soviet imperial ambitions in the region. With the withdrawal of the British from the subcontinent in 1947, one side of that power equation was removed, and there appeared on Afghanistan's eastern frontier a new nation whose existence Afghanistan had opposed and whose mutual border it refused to recognize. Ever wary of its northern neighbor, the Afghan Government sought U.S. military assistance and territorial guarantees. Unsuccessful in that attempt and concerned over Pakistan's adherence to CENTO and SEATO, Afghanistan, in the early 50's, accepted Soviet offers of large scale military and economic aid.

The ardor with which the Royal Government of Afghanistan under then Prime Minister Daoud pursued the Pushtunistan issue (with a large assist by Pakistani hostility) resulted in two major crises: in 1955 and from 1961-63. Both crises resulted in an increase in Soviet influence, in the form of loans and of permission for transit of goods through the USSR. The initial quantum jumps in Afghan-Soviet trade date to those years when the border of landlocked Afghanistan with littoral Pakistan was closed. In the later crisis the resumption of diplomatic relations and the opening of Pakistan for the

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transit of Afghan imports and exports were possible only after the partially-voluntary, partially forced resignation of Mohammad Daoud.

In sum, the two U.S. objectives as defined in the 1969 NSC paper are closely related: the Afghan Pushtunistan policy, which has come to the fore when Daoud has been in power, has been a major cause for the increase of Soviet influence in Afghan affairs.

U.S. Influence on Pak/Afghan Relations.

Historically U.S. ability to moderate the Pushtunistan dispute has been marginal. This has long been recognized:

"In Afghan-Pak relations, we must recognize that our influence with either government in respect to the chronic "Pushtunistan" issue is very limited, as we found out in the 1961-63 crisis..." 1969 NSC paper (p. 9)

"So far as Afghan-Pak relations are concerned, we know only too well from not so ancient history that U.S. direct efforts at providing good offices or mediation of the 'Pushtunistan' dispute are not likely to succeed because of the deep-seated emotional nature of this thorny conflict." 1974 Policy Assessment (Kabul 1090, 21 February 74)

There are further reasons why U.S. influence is limited:

- 1) The US recognizes the Durand line as the international border between Afghanistan and Pakistan.
- 2) The US is committed to the territorial integrity of Pakistan.
- 3) The US is, and is perceived by the GOA to be, an ally of Pakistan. This point was driven home by our lifting of the arms sale embargo in February 1975.

There have been no developments since 1969 that should lead us to conclude that our leverage on this issue has increased. On the contrary, while the problem became more pressing with the assumption of power of Mohammad Daoud, the quantitative importance of U.S. developmental assistance has decreased with the influx of foreign aid from other and new donors.

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The Balancing Act Since July 1973

While Mohammad Daoud has been the historical vehicle for increased Soviet influence in Afghanistan, the Review Group does not disagree with the Embassy's assessment that he is fundamentally a nationalist and desires to put maximum feasible checks on Soviet influence in Afghan affairs. Daoud's domestic balancing act, the shifts in fortune of the pro- and anti-Soviet factions within the government are less germane to the focus of this paper than the external policies he has followed to offset Soviet influence.

One of the fundamental goals of Afghan foreign policy has traditionally been to balance Soviet influence by cultivating good bilateral relations with nations perceived as adversaries of the USSR. The major tactic in pursuing this goal subsequent to the withdrawal of the British from the subcontinent in 1947 has been, of course, the cultivation of firm and visible bilateral relations with the U.S. This policy has continued under the Daoud regime. We need to consider at this point, however, elements of the external balancing act which did not exist or which were not pursued with equal vigor at the time of the 1969 NSC paper.

The importance Afghanistan attaches to good bilateral relations with the PRC is directly related to Sino-Soviet antipathy. The record of the Daoud regime's desire for good Sino-Afghan relations is clear. At the time of the 1973 coup, relations became decidedly cool as Peking initially appeared to see a Soviet hand in the coup which brought Daoud to power. In December 1974 Daoud's brother and principal foreign policy advisor Mohammad Naim, and Deputy Foreign Minister (de facto Foreign Minister) Abdullah travelled to Peking on an official visit. Upon their return to Kabul, the Deputy Foreign Minister stated that they had succeeded in convincing Chinese leaders that the coup "was purely Afghan, and nationalistic". Several weeks later a PRC aid commitment to Afghanistan of \$55 million was announced.

The role of the PRC vis-a-vis USSR was also evidenced in the burst of publicity given a non-official Chinese-Afghan Friendship group that visited Kabul just prior to the December 1975 state visit of Podgorny. The effusive Afghan elegies to Choi En-lai's international stature and world historic importance at the time of his death, could not have but rankled the Soviets and reminded them of the limits of their ability to influence Afghan foreign policy.

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Since the 1973 coup Afghanistan has successfully sought to widen options for foreign training of its military personnel. While the USSR remains the predominant supplier of military training as well as equipment, increasing numbers of military personnel are being sent to Egypt and India for training. This development must also be seen in terms of the Afghan objective of balancing Soviet influence. While Egypt and India do not have the same adversary relation with the USSR as do the U.S. and China, it is interesting to note that the GOA chose for military training two countries with considerable experience in dealing with the Soviet Union as a military supplier.

The rise in the economic, and political clout of the OPEC countries since the time of the NSC paper has been one of the most significant recent global developments. The increased stature and might of the Islamic members of OPEC has been welcomed by the government of Afghanistan, and the Daoud regime has assiduously and successfully courted the Islamic oil exporting nations for development assistance, most notably Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Iran.

The massive Iranian commitment to Afghanistan affects Afghanistan's ability to counter Soviet influence. As this is one of the major turning points of the analysis of this Review, Iranian/Afghan relations need be touched upon in some detail.

Iranian-Afghan relations have historically been uneven. Religion has been a source of conflict. While both are Islamic countries, Iran is predominantly Shi'a while Afghanistan is Sunni. Afghanistan suffers from the poor cousin syndrome regarding Iran, and is also exceedingly sensitive to Iranian statements about common Persian heritage. This latter tendency is reinforced by Pushtun ascendancy in Afghanistan, as this ethnic group looks East rather than West for its linguistic and cultural ties.

In addition to these sensitivities, relations between the two countries following the July 1973 coup were cool. Iran was initially concerned that the coup was Soviet assisted and that the assumption of power by Mohammad Daoud marked another increase in Soviet influence in Afghan affairs. Further, Iran was concerned over the reinvigoration of the Pushtunistan issue and especially sensitive to Afghan calls for Baluch rights and autonomy. For its part the new regime accused the government it overthrew of selling out Afghanistan on the Helmand Waters Agreement.

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Afghan/Iranian relations underwent a major breakthrough in 1974, largely at the initiative of the Shah. Iranian aid commitments to Afghanistan now total some 720 million dollars plus an Iranian commitment to financially assist Afghanistan in building its first railway, with a conservatively estimated cost of \$500 million. Iranian ability to deal with prickly Afghan sensitivities and the importance Iran gives to Afghanistan were well demonstrated by the treatment afforded President Daoud during his state visit to Tehran in May 1975.

Improving relations and strengthening economic ties between Afghanistan and Iran is an aspect of one of the two U.S. objectives defined in the 1969 NSC paper. U.S. objectives are also well served as Iranian influence serves to counterbalance Soviet influence. This is not a startling assertion: it is the major intent of Iranian aid, and this has been understood by the Afghans, the Soviets, and ourselves.

"This is a major development and good news for Afghanistan, Iran, the region and the U.S. Two highranking Afghans have told us that both countries have overcome their centuries-old complexes, involving cultural and religious differences, historical enmities and the rich-poor syndrome. The Afghans have decided to forge this new relationship to obtain economic and financial aid.

The GOA clearly feels that this departure from National Afghan policy is a demonstration of the Daoud regime's adherence to a pro-Afghanistan, pragmatic foreign policy. We agree." Kabul 4681, 29 July 74.

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As reported by our Embassy in Moscow (Moscow 18473, 30 Dec 75) Soviet concern over growing Iranian influence in Afghanistan was most recently manifested during Podgorny's December 1975 state visit to Kabul.

Iran is in a strong position to forward U.S. objectives in Afghanistan. U.S. and Iranian policy re Soviet influence in Afghanistan are identical at present and there is no reason to believe they will diverge in the short to medium term. As they are neighbors, Iran's interest in checking Soviet influence in Afghanistan is more direct and vital

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than for the U.S. Iranian aid is aimed at developing Western Afghanistan and increasing economic and trade links between the two countries. The U.S. has neither the desire nor resources to play the "numbers game" in foreign assistance to Afghanistan. However, if Iranian aid is implemented, Iran will become the largest single development donor to Afghanistan.

The importance of the Iranian connection is not confined to balancing Soviet influence in Afghan affairs. Iran has long-standing good relations with Pakistan and a vital stake in forestalling developments in the Pushtunistan dispute from escalating to the point where regional stability would be endangered. Further, Iran has a better record than the United States in mediating past flare-ups in Pak/Afghan relations.

It might be objected that Iranian aid to Afghanistan though massive, has yet to materialize. Given Afghanistan's difficulties in preparing the necessary feasibility studies and in effectively absorbing the vast amounts of foreign aid, it is premature to argue that Iran has already become a significant force in balancing Soviet influence in Afghan affairs.

It is true that the Afghan/Iranian economic and trade links will increase only as the agreed upon projects for Iranian financial assistance are actually implemented. However, it should be recalled that the modified Great Game that the U.S. has been a party to for these 20 odd years is primarily symbolic and political from our side. As was noted previously there can be no question of the U.S. literally counterbalancing Soviet influence and importance to Afghanistan. While Iran's potential importance in terms of trade and development assistance may in the future actually rival that of the USSR, the political significance of the Iranian connection is not potential, but actual, and lies in the good bilateral relations between the two countries as evidenced by the Iranian offer and the Afghan acceptance of massive economic assistance from the strongest regional adversary of the USSR.

The 1969 NSC Paper: Political Arguments for the Level of Our Presence.

The analysis to this point has focused on developments since 1969 which bear on the Afghan ability to check Soviet

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influence on Afghan affairs. The Review Group concludes that while limitation of Soviet influence remains a valid, and indeed primary U.S. objective in Afghanistan; and while friendly Afghan/US relations will remain a major part of the Afghan strategy to reach this end, regional developments cited previously and the healthy state of Afghan bilateral relations with countries which are perceived as having adversary relationships with the USSR, relatively diminish the importance of the U.S. in Afghanistan's balancing act. What implications follow from this conclusion for the level of our programs and activities in Afghanistan?

The 1969 NSC paper put forward certain criteria for determining the appropriate level of our presence in Afghanistan.

A substantial increase from the then current level of assistance was dismissed in that: 1) our resources were limited; 2) Afghanistan's ability to handle massive new aid infusions was limited; and, 3) such a move might be misconstrued by the Soviets. These considerations remain equally valid today.

The 1969 NSC paper also considered the possibility of a reduction in the level of our assistance, programs, and presence. However, such a course was not deemed advisable as:

1) Substantial cuts below the then current level could lead both the Afghans and Soviets to conclude that we are "pulling our chips out".

2) "Afghanistan is far from capable of doing without external economic assistance, and for us to retrench significantly would in effect be a recognition of unchallenged Soviet influence on Afghan actions."

The second assertion is plainly no longer true as Afghanistan has more foreign assistance funds than it can effectively use and from sources other than the Soviets. The first consideration remains true for a dramatic decrease in U.S. assistance. However, if our presence is, as this Review has argued, relatively less important, then a reasonable conclusion would be that a gradual phased reduction of our programs, assistance

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level, and presence would not adversely impact on U.S. objectives in Afghanistan as defined in the 1969 NSC paper. It could also be argued that given Afghanistan's present superfluity of development assistance funds, the level of U.S. presence has become less crucial, even if the importance of good bilateral relations with the U.S. has not diminished in the Afghan strategy of counterbalancing Soviet influence.

The Alternative Conclusion.

There is, however, an equally valid, alternate conclusion: that the strictly political U.S. objectives as expressed in the 1969 NSC paper from which derive the justification of all our activities in Afghanistan no longer constitute an exhaustive definition of U.S. objectives in Afghanistan.

While it is true that our programs and activities are important for the credence they give to U.S. support for Afghan non-alignment and independence, at the same time the U.S. has an independent interest in fostering the economic development of Afghanistan. As the Secretary of State has declared on various occasions, the future and survival of the industrialized nations and developing nations are inextricably linked. The U.S. has a real and vital interest in the economic and agricultural development of the LDC's. Further, there is a good case to be made that Afghanistan is a relatively good candidate for U.S. development assistance regardless of political objectives. While Afghanistan appears on the MSA (most seriously affected) list and is one of the six poorest countries in the world, nevertheless it has enough arable land, ordinarily sufficient water, and enough other resources to feed and clothe its people. As noted by the 1975 Review Group, Afghanistan also has the potential to become a net food exporting country.

It is the belief of the Review Group that the political justifications for our programs as set forth in 1969 are less convincing in 1976. If those political objectives are still considered exhaustive, then the level of our presence and programs in Afghanistan can be gradually phased down without significant adverse effect on those political objectives. Alternatively, the question of the appropriateness of the level of our assistance and programs remains open, if the economic, social and agricultural development of Afghanistan is stated as a U.S. objective and interest, the importance of which is not solely derived from regional political objectives.

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Subsidiary Argument: The 1973 Aid Legislative Guidelines.

Are our current development efforts in Afghanistan, aimed at directly aiding the poorest majority, well suited to achieving U.S. objectives in Afghanistan?

As was stated previously in this Review, both the USC and successive governments of Afghanistan have stressed that the primary importance of U.S. presence in Afghanistan is political and serves to counterbalance Soviet influence in Afghanistan.

"His [Daoud's] spokesmen have made clear that the motive is the same one traditionally expressed over the years by the monarchy; i.e., foremost a desire for U.S. political presence to help counterbalance overwhelming Russian specific gravity, and secondarily economic aid for development effort.

"Our program decisions here should reflect that parallelism, and should always be made with the overriding political interests in mind which have from the inception of U.S. assistance to Afghanistan been the bedrock justification for that assistance."
1974 Annual Policy Assessment Kabul 1090, 21 Feb 74

We no longer consider undertaking major infrastructure projects. However, such projects are more visible, more dramatic tokens of U.S. commitment to Afghanistan than small scale rural works, family planning services, basic health centers, rural schools, and so on. The GOA, like many governments of developing countries, has a traditional tendency to prefer and to attach greater significance to the construction of roads, dams, airports, silos, state farms, etc.

It can be argued that Afghanistan now has a superfluity of funds for infrastructure projects, and that our programs offer a unique component of technical expertise not available from Afghanistan's new donors. Further, that our programs aimed at aiding the poorest majority very directly support the promises of the Daoud regime to upgrade the standard of living of, and services available to the majority of Afghans. By so doing our programs are a positive factor for internal political and economic stability which we have long recognized as means to achieve the larger political objective of counterbalancing Soviet influence.

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These are sound arguments, but do not counter the basic proposition that our present activities under the 1973 legislative guidelines are less suited to achieving the political and symbolic impact of U.S. presence than were our traditional projects in Afghanistan. This is a serious defect if our programs are justified solely in terms of countering Soviet presence. However, if the alternative presented previously is adopted - stating that the economic and social development of Afghanistan is a U.S. objective not entirely derived from our prime political objective - then this defect largely disappears.

On the Erosion of Our Resources.

The Mission is experiencing an erosion of resources available to carry out U.S. objectives in Afghanistan. For example, in the future we will have to cut the number of students who can study at U.S. universities on Fulbright scholarships and also probably cut the number of Afghan military officers sent for training in the U.S. The loss of a slot in the Economic/Commercial Section will make us less able to effectively exploit the increasing opportunities for U.S. firms to win contracts for projects funded by OPEC aid. (See Annex C)

The Review Group believes that the reduction in CU funds and the likely cutback in the MAP training budget and greatly increased costs will reduce our long term influence in Afghanistan far more than is apparent from the relatively small amounts of money involved in the cuts.

The positive impact of International Visitors' and Educational Exchange Programs is an established tenet of the Mission. In a circumscribed, state-controlled environment, exposing current and future leaders to American culture and education helps establish a base for bilateral communications and eases the task of explaining U.S. policies. The military is one of the few national institutions in Afghanistan, one of the most politically important, and one of the most susceptible to Soviet influence given the USSR role as the major supplier of military equipment and training. While our MAP training program is small, averaging some fifteen officers per year, currently five officers so trained hold high and influential positions in the Ministry of National Defense.

One possible conclusion of the analysis presented earlier in this Review is that a non-dramatic reduction in our presence and programs here would not imperil U.S. objectives as

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defined in the 1969 NSC paper. This proposition does not imply however that such reductions could take place indiscriminately. It is the considered opinion of the Review Group that the last place these should occur is our programs that directly influence key or potentially influential Afghan officials.

On the Conduct of Our Working Relation with the GOA.

The Review Group has drawn upon Mission and State Department analyses as well as the 1969 NSC paper to assess the extent our history of assistance and our current programs in Afghanistan afford us leverage to realize our objectives. Assuming an expanded list of objectives, a reasonable score-card would read.

- 1) Afghan Voting in International Forums: marginal influence. (See Annex A)
- 2) Narcotics Control: marginal influence. (See Annex B)
- 3) Improving Pak/Afghan Relations: marginal influence.
- 4) Improving Iranian/Afghan Relations: marginal influence.
- 5) Afghan Economic Development: significant influence.
- 6) Counterbalancing the Soviets: great influence.

The reason for the variation in our influence is not difficult to ascertain. Except for economic development and balancing Soviet influence, Afghan interests and priorities have not paralleled those of the United States. It is not surprising that our success in realizing other objectives has been limited.

We would not have been able to foster economic development unless the governments of Afghanistan also gave priority to that goal. Our presence and activities could not have served to counterbalance Soviet influence unless this was a vital interest of the GOA and former governments.

Why belabor such obvious tenets of our conventional wisdom? For this reason: the GOA at times seems to have lost sight of this parallelism of interests and often acts as if it were accommodating us by cooperating, to the extent it does, with our mutually agreed upon bilateral programs and activities. The United States is more important to Afghanistan, than Afghanistan is to the United States.

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Another truism, but one which the Review Group feels is seldom reflected in Afghan dealings with the Mission, except at the highest levels. It does not serve U.S. interests in Afghanistan when the Mission is continually put in the position of having to use its limited fund of influence to secure sufficient Afghan cooperation to make possible the functioning of programs and activities which, after all, are supposed to be the source of that influence. Nor does it insure the successful operation of our programs.

The Review Group feels that distinction should be made between inefficiency and systemic inadequacies on one hand and Afghan complacency regarding U.S. programs on the other. While allowance, up to a point, should be made in the case of bureaucratic problems stemming from underdevelopment, complacency or lack of commitment should draw a different response from the U.S. Mission.

Consider the Helmand Valley. For years the Mission had urged that Afghan Government to institute certain changes in its institutions and policies in the Helmand in order to make possible effective collaboration and the success of our efforts there. Changes in this direction were instituted only after we had withdrawn from the Helmand and the GOA was shaken in its complacency about continued U.S. involvement.

The Review Group believes that a stiffening in the Mission's stance, a greater willingness to reduce or terminate activities and programs in which the GOA does not show sufficient interest, as evidenced by its actions, would enhance, not detract from our influence here.

This recommendation is not meant to be an across-the-board criticism of current Mission policy or practices. The origins for the complacent Afghan attitude lie in the past. Further, the Review Group claims no originality for its recommendation: our thinking has been stimulated by discussions with members of the Country Team and by recent policy and program decisions in various elements of the Mission. We believe the following decisions and program concepts are positive and along the lines we wish to recommend:

- The decision to return IVP slots to CU if the GOA does not respond positively by a reasonable deadline, since the previous noted importance of the program can be seriously undermined by lack of GOA interest and cooperation.

- USAID's Fixed Amount Reimbursement system which not only entails primary Afghan involvement in management and

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project design, initial commitment of resources, and actual construction, but also makes U.S. payment of the agreed upon fixed cost dependent upon successful completion of the project according to previously agreed specifications.

- USAID's initiation of a project management system which provides specific project implementation deadlines for actions to be taken by USAID and the appropriate GOA agency, and which requires a recognition of the threat to project continuation and/or success should those actions not occur.

The conclusion reached earlier in this Review that the GOA now has and is pursuing more options in balancing Soviet influence, decreases the risk to our primary political objective in adopting a tougher stance toward GOA cooperation with our programs and activities. However, the Review Group believes that even if this conclusion is not accepted, the recommendation for a tougher Mission attitude stands on its own merits. Further, that its adoption by the Mission would lead to fruitful reappraisal by the GOA of its working relations with the Mission, and by so doing well serve the entire range of U.S. interests in Afghanistan.

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ANNEX A

U.S. MULTILATERAL vs. BILATERAL OBJECTIVES: AFGHANISTAN

"One of the factors by which the American Government will measure the value another country attaches to its relationship to U.S. will be its statements and its votes on matters of importance to U.S. in international forums. Unfriendly attitudes and actions -- indiscriminate opposition to resolutions of significance to U.S. or speeches broadly attacking the United States -- may well have an adverse effect upon our bilateral relationship." State 303856, 30 Dec 75

The above paragraph from a cable from the Secretary of State to the Ambassador, indicates the greater scrutiny being given to the relations between a country's votes at multilateral forums and its bilateral relations with the U.S. A later message (State 13264, 20 Jan 76) raises the possibility that a pattern of voting hostile to vital U.S. interests at multilateral forums could impact on bilateral relations, primarily through delays, reductions, or cancellations of new aid commitments.

The Ambassador has asked that the issue of Afghan votes in the UN and the question of whether and how we should retaliate now or in the future, be considered by the Policy Review Group.

How the Afghans Vote.

Afghanistan has long proclaimed a non-aligned foreign policy, traditionally expressed as based on the principles of non-participation in military pacts, friendly bilateral relations with all countries, and free judgment on international issues. The Afghan policy of "bi-tarafi" has however undergone a transmutation in the last ten years. Non-alignment has come to mean "adherence to the non-aligned movement" as was proclaimed by President Daoud during Podgorny's visit to Kabul in December 1975. The transformation, however, came much earlier. Prior to 1967 Afghanistan seldom took stances on issues not strictly germane to the Kingdom's direct national interests. This policy changed with the 1967 Arab-Israeli war. An examination of Afghan votes at the UN since 1970 (cf. Kabul A-101, 24 Dec 75) shows that Afghanistan is a relatively passive voter, intent on maintaining its non-aligned credentials. The basic tendency of Afghan voting is to cleave to the majority position. On issues that are seen to bear directly on Afghan interests, such as the rights of

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landlocked countries, Afghan representatives do not hesitate to desert their majority position. On closely contested issues on which there is no "non-aligned" position and the United States opposes the Soviet Union, Afghanistan normally votes with the Soviets. There is one important exception: the Korea question on which, as a consequence of a history of good bilateral relations with Korea and repeated representations at all levels by the U.S., the GOA has traditionally abstained.

Except on issues that directly relate to Afghan national interests, the GOA appears to consider it in its general national interest to vote with the non-aligned bloc. While Afghanistan is only one of many nations which follows this strategy, it is precisely at the bloc voting and "steam roller tactics" of the non-aligned group that recent policy statements linking multilateral voting with U.S. bilateral relations is aimed. If the policy of manipulating U.S. bilateral assistance programs to take into account friendly or hostile votes at international forums were instituted, Afghanistan would fit the profile of target countries.

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ANNEX B

U.S. OBJECTIVES IN AFGHANISTAN: NARCOTICS

International narcotics control has emerged as an important U.S. interest and foreign policy objective since the 1969 NSC paper was drafted. Traditionally the Afghan opium crop has been locally consumed or illegally exported to its principal market in Iran. However, the possibility of Afghan opium reaching Western markets and ultimately the United States can not be dismissed. Further there are indications that there now exist facilities in Afghanistan for the manufacture of heroin which, if produced in quantity, would naturally gravitate to the more lucrative Western markets.

Though Daoud takes a tough and no-nonsense approach to drug trafficking, the GOA has demonstrated a marked hesitancy to cooperate bilaterally with the U.S. on narcotics control matters. Our attempts to secure Afghan candidates for DEA or US Customs training have been largely fruitless. However the GOA has accepted a UN Narcotics Advisor and cooperated with UN efforts in Afghanistan. There exists a close and productive relationship between the UN Narcotics Advisor and our DEA representative. Indeed the success of the UN effort to increase seizures depends to a great extent on the resources DEA has been able to provide through the UN Narcotics Advisor to support the investigations of the Interior Ministry's Anti-Smuggling Unit, and for the purchase of evidence and information. Given Afghan political sensitivities concerning visible bilateral relations with the U.S. on narcotics matters, close cooperation with and monitoring of the UNFDAC program here constitutes the best means of achieving U.S. narcotic control objectives in Afghanistan.

Statement of Objective.

A U.S. objective in Afghanistan is, in the short run, suppression of Afghan heroin processing potential, disruption of trafficking networks and increased seizures of opium and its derivatives and, in the long run, the eradication of opium cultivation in Afghanistan.

Recommendations.

In light of the aforementioned considerations and objective, the Review Group recommends:

- 1) that the Mission be prepared to exert its maximum influence on the GOA to move against Afghan heroin production

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facilities, should definite information of the existence of such laboratories be developed;

2) that close attention continue to be given to whether the GOA is successfully pursuing the policy of suppressing opium cultivation in the Helmand Valley;

3) that DEA Kabul continue to work in close cooperation with the UN Narcotics Advisor to Afghanistan.

4) that ways be sought whereby invitations for U.S. narcotic training programs be presented to the Afghans through UNFDAC, either in Kabul or Geneva.

5) that we encourage Iran, the major recipient of Afghan opium, to increase its support for UNFDAC, and to discuss the narcotics problem with Afghanistan in a bilateral context.

6) that we encourage the GOA to apply funds generated by the sale of seized opium to narcotics suppression activities.

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ANNEX C

U.S. PRIVATE INVESTMENT AND CONTRACTOR SERVICES.

One of the means to achieve our objectives as stated in the 1969 NSC paper is to "encourage more private sector activity, domestic and foreign".

The private sector in Afghanistan is stagnant. New investment, both domestic and foreign, is limited by constraints imposed by the government and a common feeling of uncertainty and restlessness. Until substantial changes are made in government policy to facilitate investment, we anticipate only a trickle of new investments in the private sector. There is nothing we can do to remedy the situation except to encourage the GOA to improve the investment climate, to provide business services, and to give a realistic picture of the country to prospective investors.

On the other hand, the prospects for the employment of foreign contractors by the GOA to complete large, new infrastructure projects financed largely by loans and grants from the oil producing countries have never been better. Over the next decade Afghanistan may receive in excess of \$1 billion in assistance from OPEC countries, especially Iran. The Afghans require foreign technical expertise and construction and engineering firms to utilize assistance. American firms are actively competing for contracts and we anticipate an increase in the number of American firms, under contract to the GOA, operating in Afghanistan.

Recommendation.

that the primary task of the Mission in the Economic/Commercial Field is to support U.S. firms competing for development projects financed by OPEC countries and other donors.

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COMMENT

The 1974 and 1975 Review Groups devoted considerable attention to the issue of how the style of the American community impacts on our individual and organization effectiveness. Involved in the development of this theme were language training, housing policy, the level of services provided the official community, and other administrative issues. The Department in its response to the 1974 Annual Review stated:

"Finally, Department endorses Mission's increased efforts toward improved understanding by Americans of Afghan language and culture and other measures to decrease 'ghetto mentality' of American community in Kabul. We agree such moves will enhance American presence and foreign policy objectives in Afghanistan." State 072260, 11 April 1974

The 1975 Review Group made a number of recommendations concerning the style of our presence. While the 1975 Policy Assessment did not incorporate these recommendations, a commitment was made:

"General Comments -- Style/Presence. A concern in all programs and agency plans for the coming year is the "style" of the U.S. presence in Afghanistan. In such basic administrative areas as housing, the Mission is undertaking a review of the appropriateness of the size, appearance, location, furnishings, etc., of the houses currently occupied, continuing to seek to avoid what Afghans might regard as ostentation or 'ghetto-ization' in how we live." Kabul 1837, 26 March 1975

To this Review Group's knowledge no such review has taken place - though there was some puzzling measuring of square footage of homes.

In this year's Review Group sessions the issue of style was examined, exhorted, debated. We have no common position on the issue of style but the Review Group unanimously agrees that Mission commitments stemming from the review process should be carried out.

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SUPPLEMENTARY, DISSENTING AND ADDITIONAL VIEWS ON
THE POLICY REVIEW GROUP PAPER
by Review Group Member Alvin G. Edgell

I find myself in essential agreement with the Paper's description and analysis of the central geopolitical aspects. And I admire and respect the intelligence and hard work that went into it. But I feel I must respectfully separate myself from some, and go beyond others, of the interpretations and recommendations, especially where these verge onto, or deal directly with, the area of developmental assistance. One issue here was left entirely out of the Group paper.

In a few aspects my separation may be in part laid to the unfortunate fact that the constraint of limited time precluded their full discussion, and the possible compromising of views.

Because I feel that the process (largely conditioned by time constraints) made our effort difficult and risked limiting its completeness, I suggest some thought be given to improving this process. Most importantly, it should start far enough in advance of deadlines to permit the necessary general study, preparation of the individuals' contributions -- themselves ideally based on outside consultations -- and the multi-sided reflection on and response to all participants' views; and certainly there should be time for careful final drafting in the closest possible shared effort. But this is not only a matter of starting far enough in advance. In view of the presumably highest importance of this exercise for the overall Mission effort, provision should be made for the participants to be able to give it, at least at key periods, priority attention over regular agency work. A series of one or two day "retreats" scattered at timely points along the flow of the process might be considered. I commend this and the consideration of other possible remedies to whomever is responsible for setting up the structure and process of the Mission's future policy reviews.

As to my substantive separations, while there will be apparent certain common themes or emphases, they do not constitute a systematic critique of the Group paper, and so in themselves will have no direct continuity. Rather they will explicitly relate to particular parts of the Group paper, except in the instance where one issue has been omitted from the paper.

Page 11 of the Review

Up to this point I am in essential accord with the paper's analysis of circumstances and events as they relate to the 1969

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NSC paper. I agree that the argument thus far leads to the conclusion that the level of our overall programs and presence could be reduced in "a gradual (and) phased fashion" without adverse effect on our objectives as defined in the NSC paper.

However, the focus on levels (presumably magnitudes) disturbingly leaves out of account the matter of the content of our programs as they might differentially effect our continuing objectives, even in their NSC formulation and related strategies. These strategies include the fostering of effective economic and social development in Afghanistan and the exposure of Afghans to American people, methods and institutions (See pp. 3-4). Certainly the mere availability of Iranian and other non-Soviet funds leaves out of account the technical and institutional expertise (our specialty) necessary for effective development. And the influence that we would like to have accrue to the U.S. from sympathetic contact between Afghans and our people and institutions, certainly relates to the kind of Americans and their work that Afghans encounter here.

Lamentably, the only place where the Paper proper deals explicitly with program content -- as opposed to the frequent invocation of levels -- is in the section "On the Erosion of Our Resources" (p. 13) where concern over the possible reduction of the MAP training program stimulated a warning against indiscriminate program reductions.

"The Alternative Conclusion" (p. 11)

I agree with this section up to its last paragraph. From this point on, and through the section "Subsidiary Argument: The 1973 AID Legislative Guidelines," I have felt it necessary to state an independent, but not fundamentally opposed position -- still sharing many discrete perceptions set forth in the Paper proper. I am, frankly, concerned to make a stronger case for our programs of effective (when and if they are) development assistance being in our solidly -- not alternative -- American interest, both those embraced in the NSC paper, and those complementary to the NSC's. From the point where I diverge from the Paper -- indicated above -- I offer the following in substitution:

A Supplementary View of US Interests in Afghanistan; What Effective Development Assistance Does for Us

To quote the paraphrase on page 11, Secretary Kissinger (among others) "has declared on various occasion, the future

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and survival of the industrialized nations and developing nations are inextricably linked". The specific dynamics of this complicated linkage are presumably not clear in all respects to anyone. But we can reasonably infer that in addition to the NSC type of interests (links), it will be vital in the long run for the U.S. to maintain relations of some (perceived) sympathy - and certainly to avoid widespread, intense hostility - with a significant proportion of the developing world.

This is not the place to go further into where we stand now on the matter. But we can set down some graduated, linked objectives, directly related to our largest Afghan operational activity, development assistance, that would conduce to these extra-NSC interests, as well as serve those more narrowly political. My suggestions:

1. Clearly perceived U.S. identification with Afghanistan's selective modernization -- on a mutually respectful basis.
2. Widely perceived U.S. identification with the development problems of the 3/4/5th Worlds, by the emergence here of attractive model for such relationships.
3. Widely perceived identification with problems concerning increasingly wide segments of the world, most immediately the threatening worldwide food shortage.

The more ramifying objectives would of course have to be supported by or be compatible with U.S. behavior on the broader canvas. But what we do here could conduce to the advancement of them all.

Because of the long term nature of developmental programs, if we accept priority commitment to them, it is vital for the effectiveness of assistance given them that this aid not be unduly impinged upon or interrupted by other, short term interests. Also, if our development assistance is seen as being used as leverage for these other interests, all of our interests may well suffer.

In the more traditional political arena, President Daoud and his spokesmen have spent a great deal of public rhetoric on the government's concern for widely distributive development, and there is an obvious connection between this objective and those of political support and stability. However much other current priorities and internal constraints tend to impede rapid developmental steps, we can reasonably expect that bona fide, if selective development will

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be pursued by the GOA as and when practicable. There is no reason to assume that the private rhetoric of senior officials to American officials on the primacy of "counterbalancing" political values over those of development is necessarily more valid than the public rhetoric; Afghans usually speak to the needs of their audience.

We might note that an effective development assistance program is perhaps the best vehicle for most of the NSC strategy of exposing "influential or potentially influential Afghans, and the Afghan public at large to U.S. society, culture, institutions and American ways of organizing men and resources" (p. 3).

Coordination of U.S. Development Assistance.

Because of the salience, and importance on all scores, of the U.S. aid program in Afghanistan, it is worth considering whether or not an alternative form of coordination might improve this service to our interests.

Significant Afghan officials have indicated that they do not see much value of volunteer (not just Peace Corps) and other less-than-senior expert manpower assistance unless they are parts of projects that include outsiders' material resources. And we might consider the possible validity, rather than mere cupidity, of this position. Afghan officials generally perceive U.S. agencies as operating more monolithically than is perhaps in fact the case. (By not acting on this perception we are perhaps failing to, at times, use the perfectly valid leverage that exists.) These are among the phenomena that suggest it would be a proper adjustment to Afghan realities on many fronts for us to conceptualize, plan, negotiate, and carry out our development assistance programs in more structured coordination.

The present parallel communication through the Ambassador, while very helpful, is not true coordination. This appears to require some regular format where the leadership of USAID, Peace Corps, USIS and senior Embassy officials could come to more fully understand and relate to the common effort and objectives. (The legislative and other head office parameters for each agency would of course be taken as given, for the most part.) In this fashion, a larger and more varied fund of development related expertise could be brought to bear on overarching issues as well as particular sectoral and programmatic matters. And this could lead to useful cooperation in discrete project negotiation and implementation in perhaps many more cases than in the past.

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U.S. Imposed Restraint on Effective Development Assistance.

I am of course essentially an outsider to the detailed operation and interpretation of the 1973 aid legislation. But, on the face of it, these have a vital connection with the effectiveness of our development assistance program here. And enough evidence of problems in this area has fallen under my glance to impel me to humbly and respectfully suggest that consideration be given the possibility that we are interpreting the legislation in a way that precludes our participation in crucial aspects of development, and thereby handicapping chances to realistically improve the state of the poor. Or, if this is not the case, then we may not be making our case as forcefully in Washington as necessary to gain acceptance of interpretations of vital importance to Afghanistan's circumstances. I of course am not in a position to be aware of whatever may have been done in this field, but it is so important that I am willing to risk some scorn as a busybody for bringing it up here.

It does seem unlikely that aid to the numerous poor can be provided here on any sustainable basis until something is done in the area of effective institution building, at least in tandem with efforts to get benefits directly to the poorest. This would include certain aspects of higher education as well as broad and numerous aspects of administrative reform, which among other things seem all but precluded by the present interpretations of the legislation. It is encouraging to note, however, that where it can, in its projects that do pass muster, USAID is concerned with building the related institutions. But this cannot always be done effectively by indirection.

"On the Conduct of Our Working Relations with the GOA" (p. 14)

I accept the rough accuracy of the "scorecard". I heartily agree with the perception (wisdom, but apparently not very conventional) that it is only in the areas where we have an overlapping of interests that we are likely to have much programmatic and objective success. One might usefully conclude from this that we should not normally get into programs where there is not some substantial coincidence of interests with the Afghans. And while I share the view that

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we should not indefinitely allow our programs to continue in the face of Afghan non-cooperation, I have some differences regarding the analysis of, or more accurately, speculation upon the dynamics at work on (primarily) the Afghan side of the relationships.

Simple complacency is of course not the only factor at work in so many of the perceived Afghan responses that probably all of us have found so frustrating. The Paper proper makes allowances for the role of Afghan "inefficiency". I would assign somewhat more importance to this factor, and urge that we study more carefully the structures and conditioning factors behind it, to better understand when it is actually this barrier that is controllingly at work. In large part this "inefficiency" is the central and limiting phenomenon of Afghanistan's underdevelopment, itself the acknowledged target of our assistance programs. A closer analysis of the bureaucracy and how it got that way would probably help most of us do our jobs more effectively. This of course is not the place for that exploration.

But we should frankly examine some other possible sources of the frustrations in our programmatic encounters with Afghans, sources in which we have had some hand. For one thing, the complacency we seem to see so often may indeed have been encouraged by our patronizing softness at earlier times. (And having been suppressing a slow burn for so long over Afghan "complacency," some of us now seem in some danger of giving way to annoyance, or worse, in our counter-responses.)

But other difficulties have also been inherited from the past, some of it not so distant. A convenient summary phrase is "aid-backlash". Our own performance, some in human relations style and some in technical content, has not always done us credit or won friends. The aid relationship itself is not ennobling to the recipient, and none of us need to be reminded of the prickliness of Afghan pride. The build-up and crippling results of a dependency relationship are also being recognized -- and resented, however unjustly. Our own failures to deliver, sometimes on the key technical people, and the inappropriateness (both technical and personal) of some of these people themselves (including PCVs) should be frankly recognized as contributing to present Afghan perceptions and behavior. This is not to say that we have performed wretchedly throughout, many superb Americans and successful projects have made some mark. But we must be frank about some rather large warts as well. I only urge that we bear these, and how they have been perceived, in mind when drawing conclusions on the encounter and where to go from here.

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I believe that we should always have avoided projects, and have been ready to terminate others, when there is no reasonably clear sustained evidence of a substantial, authoritative common interest in them. But we must be sure that we have done everything to get clear communication on this with the authoritative figures in each case. This often means a good deal of patience and even manipulation to get relevant Afghans to communicate with one another on their positions vis-a-vis us. No doubt both have been practiced in abundance by many readers of this paper.

"Actions" are of course among the useful indicators of the essential interest. But these, or their absence, can sometimes be deceiving, and I would suggest some caution in attempting to set up trip-wires on the basis of which decisions on program continuations are made, to the reduction or exclusion of the application of sensitive, complexity-grasping, situational judgment. In this connection I am rather dubious about the simple conclusion regarding cause and effect of actions in the Helmand example cited in this section of the Paper proper.

The Review "Comment"

In supplement to this section of the Paper, I feel it is important to underscore some important ramifications of our "community style". First is the obvious connection between Afghan perceptions of our self-presentation and the NSC's strategy for influence through sympathetic social and institutional contacts. The specific dynamics of this connection might best be examined in the course of the recommended study. Additionally, there are the dubious developmental effects of demonstrating taste-models that reinforce tendencies toward a dual economy, i.e., where the elite and the multitudinous poor live in widely different -- if touching -- worlds. And of course there is the Afghan hurt and envy, and, additionally, the insulation of development-related U.S. personnel from experiences and contacts that would better provide them with the understanding of the Afghan universe and outlook which is so vital to effective developmental work.

"ANNEX A: U.S. MULTILATERAL vs. BILATERAL OBJECTIVES: Afghanistan."

Again, I find the analysis and most of the conclusions valid. This Annex, again, reflects a somewhat tentative sympathy for "our goal of economic development". But the concluding, explicit recommendations fail to include any note of caution -- sounded earlier -- about the grave danger

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to our development assistance related objectives if the constituent programs, and levels, are fair game for leverage and for threatened and implemented retaliation related to Afghan behavior in international forums.

In the light of the Annex's preceding analysis, including the apparent conclusion that retaliation in the field of development assistance would rarely have a desirable political effect while development objectives would of course be directly harmed, it seems that a quite different recommendation might have been included (and the others adjusted accordingly). To wit: Given the importance of development assistance objectives, these programs should not be interfered with for other, especially short run, purposes except under the gravest of circumstances directly involving fundamental U.S. interests. I would have included reference to the long term nature of development processes, which again argues against their disruption if their important objectives are to have a chance of achievement.

On recommendation no. 2, I have always understood that it is common and accepted practice for governments to take public stances quite contrary to those privately communicated, whenever in their view their interests so require.

"ANNEX B: U.S. OBJECTIVES IN AFGHANISTAN: NARCOTICS"

Here, again, I feel that the concrete recommendations fail to note a significant factor contained in the preceding analysis. The latter notes "Afghan political sensitivities concerning visible relations with the U.S. on narcotics matters". In view of this some of the recommendations might have noted the risk of a backlash if they are implemented without the appropriate refinement.

"ANNEX C: U.S. PRIVATE INVESTMENT AND CONTRACTORS: U.S. OBJECTIVES."

This annex recommends that the Mission support U.S. firms competing for development contracts. I would agree but go considerably further in the recommendations on this subject.

We should view such contractors and their field personnel as significantly and unavoidably--attempts at ghettoization unavailing--within the context of NSC's strategy of influential contact between Afghans and Americans and their institutions. And of course their capacity to carry out

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developmental tasks should be clearly established. All of this argues for the maximum role possible for the Mission, and its AID and other back-up in Washington, along the following lines: selection, even certification, of appropriate firms; pressing the firms to send the right people, and to train them as needed for the total developmental task here.

A Matter Not Appearing in the Group's Paper.

I would have liked to have seen a recommendation for a Mission study on the issue of utilization of "Host Country Nationals" on the staffs of Mission elements. This seems a rather important and complicated subject, one on which there seems to be some differing, strong opinions -- and the practice of a good bit of conventional wisdom. Within the rigid given of security regulations and the somewhat less clear, but portentous, parameters of the Afghan social/political system, there would still appear considerable room for exploration on optimum utilization on behalf of U.S. interests.

On the more expansive, and presumably devil's side, I would simply note here that this is another area embraced, willy nilly, by the NSC strategy for influential personal and institutional contact. Effective contact in institutional/training terms also comparatively directly serves developmental objectives. Perhaps most important is the matter of the unique substantive value a HCN can provide for his employer.

My recommendation is for a disinterested study on this matter, concerned primarily with the benefits to overall U.S. interests and objectives.

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